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LANDSCAPE GARDEN SERIES



II. PLANNING THE HOME GROUNDS

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Fig. 1—The private area should be planned to express the individuality of the owner; admittance to which should be as sacred as to the house itself

Root, Ralph Rodney

LANDSCAPE GARDEN SERIES

PLANNING THE HOME GROUNDS

BY
LEONIDAS WILLING RAMSEY, B. S.



THE GARDEN PRESS
DAVENPORT, IOWA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

SOME philosophers interpret all human action as a result of desire to realize personal happiness. Considerable of that personal happiness centers around the great and beautiful wish that most of us cherish, to have a home or to have a better home. Is it any wonder, then, that so much effort in thought and time is expended in making this wish an accomplished fact?

Naturally our first thought is for the building in which we live. It is always the house first, for that means comfort and shelter. The usual course is to begin by satisfying these demands. This is unfortunate, because it often leads to a complete neglect of consideration for the exterior. There is frequently no thought given to the setting of the home and to the fact that there should be outdoor rooms as carefully planned and furnished as those indoors. It is forgotten that as much pleasure can be had from planning and developing the grounds as from planning and furnishing the rooms within the house.

But where there is cause for sorrow there is also cause for joy, for more and more is this condition being righted. More and more is the realization of the importance for the proper consideration of the grounds being felt; and an increased number of people are getting out into their grounds and spending leisure hours in that delightful contact with nature, familiarizing themselves with the joyous art of gardening.

Every properly planned place adds that much more to the cause. Improvements are observed, interest is aroused, and a more extensive and general desire is created. That which was considered non-essential is becoming to be looked on as an essential.

The home owner who has previously thought but little of the landscape development of his grounds now turns with an inquiring eye to see what his neighbor has done and looks over his own place to see what he can do. Is it any wonder that in this evolutionary state there has been considerable experimental work done and mistakes made from misguided effort?

But this only proves that the universal wish is for the better type of home which means better houses and better grounds. That your home may be of this better type, and that the ideas which you may receive

and by which you will be influenced will be correct, these principles of good design and good taste are written.

In planting your own place and watching the plants grow year by year, there will develop on your own grounds features of attractiveness and charm which will become as endeared to you as the rooms within the home. An old bush or tree which is set out and tenderly cared for often becomes in after-years a reminder of a thousand pleasant memories. Regardless of how much is attempted there are two ways of regulating our action. One way, as with all other things, is to follow the "hit or miss" path, taking the course of least resistance, building up the grounds in a haphazard manner without particular thought or purpose. The other way is to plan what is best to be done, using the proper foresight as to the outcome.

Certainly, there are many charming old places that just seem to have happened. Not only do we enjoy and admire them to the utmost, but we marvel at what are really chance results. But these cases are the exception.

Experience has proven that the reasonable course is the wiser, safer, surer and least expensive. The different parts of the ground all serve different purposes, and with them, as with anything else, the first requirement of beauty is that they satisfy that requirement of use, but in an artistic way.

The old adage that "one never hits higher than his aim" is very true in developing the grounds, for if there is not a high ideal in mind the results are apt to be most unhappy. "Aim high" would be a good motto to follow, but "aim high and employ those methods which will enable the realization of that aim," would be better. And so it is necessary to consider these methods to enable us to get the best there is out of our grounds.

In dealing with the arrangement of the grounds the determination of what should be done and how to do it is the first problem encountered. By making a landscape plan, one perforce chooses an acceptable scheme and thus provides a program of development. And is the landscape plan necessary? Decidedly, yes! A well studied plan means that the effort in time and money put in will be done so intelligently that the various requirements will be anticipated and satisfied to the best of the designer's ability.

The question may come up as to what extent should the home owner be his own designer. He should be observant enough to have ideas, to know that which he would like to have, in order that he himself where attempting to carry out these ideas,—assuming they are good ones—will realize that success depends upon the amount of expenditure and the amount of skill and specialized knowledge required to successfully carry them out. Landscape Architects are



Fig. 2 - Before. Is there anything more bleak than a house without shrubbery and flowers?



Fig. 3—After. And can anything be more attractive than a home nestled among shrubs and flowers?

especially trained men for this very purpose and when it is possible and practical, they, of course, should be consulted.

Many places, however, are not large enough to warrant the employment of a professional man, and often when the home owner of very large places derives much pleasure in planning and carrying out his own ideas, there is need only for the information which will best help him. It is necessary to have a complete plan and stick to it; regardless of who makes the plan or whether the work is done all at once, or year by year.

For those who want to divide their expenditure over a period of several years there are equal possibilities. I have in mind a small place where the owner carefully planned his grounds in advance of any undertaking. The first year he planted all the trees, the foundation planting in front, and the shrub plantations to screen out objectionable parts. The second season the foundation planting was made complete and the planting at the corners added. The third season finished the shrub planting, and the evergreens were put in their proper place. In the fourth season the herbaceous perennials and the architectural features completed the carrying out of the plans.

This place never looked as though it had been treated stingily and each successive stage marked just that much more improvement. Of

course different preferences may demand a different order in the successive stages but the function and importance of the plan is apparent throughout.

The first step in making a plan for the place is to locate upon paper the outlines of the property, house and all other existing features which would have an influence in the general design. This can be accomplished in many cases by a paced and measured survey; the most important features being located by measurement and the less important being located by stepping off the distances. (Fig. 4).

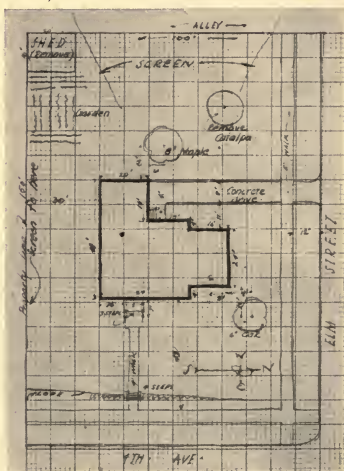


Fig. 4—A paced and measured survey

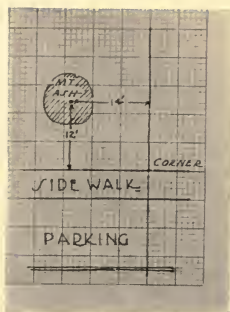


Fig. 5 — Co-ordinate paper will be found helpful in transferring measurements to paper

sheet of paper at some definite scale. 10 feet to the inch is a convenient scale for small places, while 20 feet to the inch will be found more suitable for larger places. If it is more convenient to use a common ruler instead of an engineers' scale, the map can be as accurately made at a scale of 8 or 16 feet to the inch. This drawing to the proper scale should be made upon cardboard or some other durable paper, which can be worked over without becoming damaged. (Fig. 6). Often the planting plans and design can be drawn upon the same sheet.

The scale drawing should be secured by thumb tacks to a drafting board or otherwise conveniently arranged, so that studies may be easily made by placing tracing paper over it, through which the lines of the map show. By using tracing paper to work over the survey any number of schemes can be drawn up and studied without soiling the original drawing. The illustrations

Often the use of co-ordinate paper which can be secured at any artists' supply store, will facilitate getting the measurements properly transferred to paper, as the paper is divided into squares which can be taken as equal to a square foot upon the property. Thus objects can be located by measuring this distance at right angles from some known places, such as the side of the property or sides of the house, and be transferred to the map directly by counting in each direction the unit number of squares as shown in the accompanying sketch. (Fig. 5).

The paced and measured survey should then be transferred to another

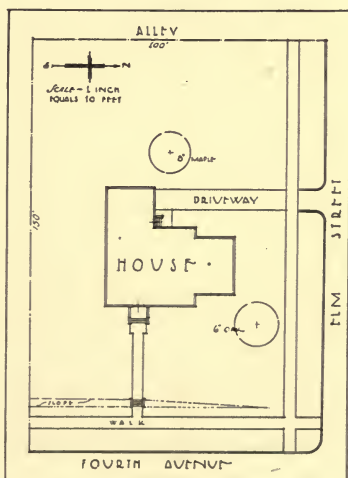


Fig. 6—An accurately drawn survey

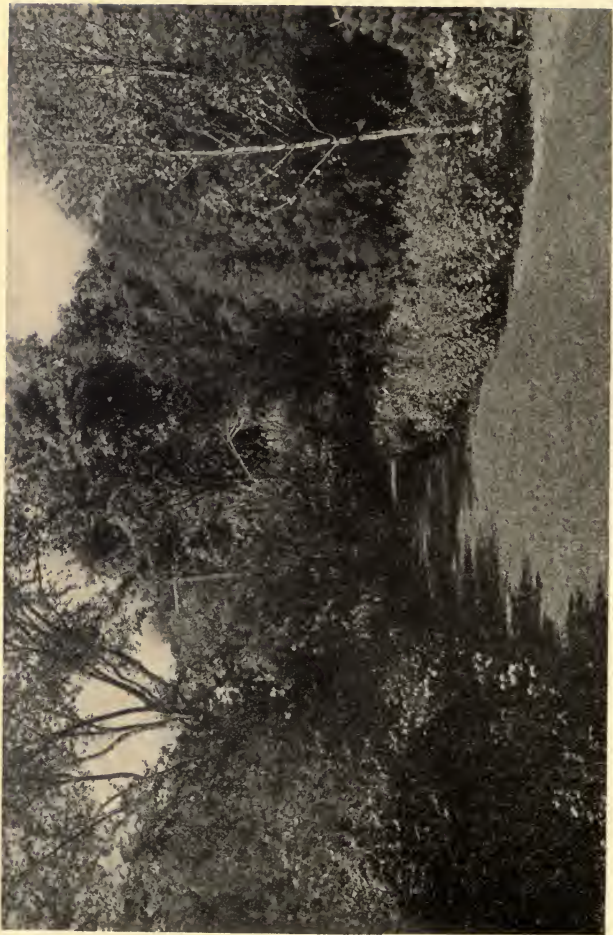


Fig. 7—The charm of a grass path. Such portions of one's grounds become as endeared to us as the rooms within the house

on page 33 will give some idea of how these studies may be worked out until by a process of reasoning and elimination the desired solution is achieved.

Upon a large place where the landscape architect will be employed in the development of the plans a more accurate survey will be desirable, if the property is irregular and if there is the problem of grades to be considered, a topographical map will be necessary. (Fig. 8.) The contour of the ground being shown by lines, each line represents a unit of difference in grade; in some cases the difference in grade is one foot, while in other cases it is two or more, varying according to the size and irregularity of the project and with the accuracy desired. The topographical map should be made by a reputable engineer or landscape architect. When completed as many blue prints can be secured by the client as is desired.

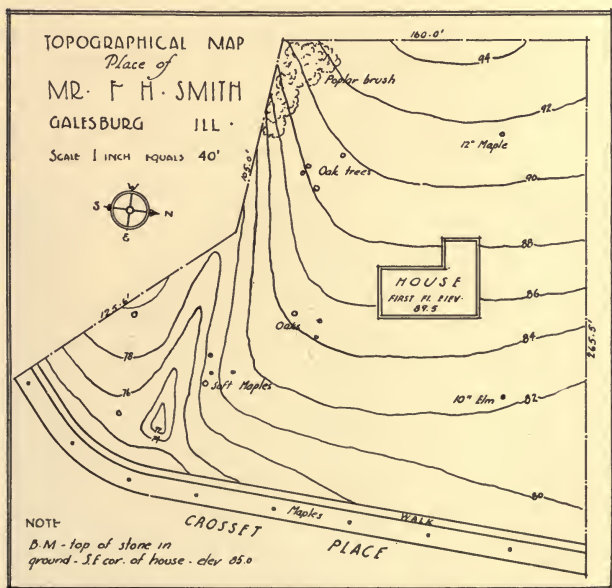


Figure 8—A topographical map

CHAPTER II

DEVELOPING THE LANDSCAPE PLAN

AFTER all the necessary preliminary data have been secured and the map drawn up the work of organizing the plan can then proceed. With pencil in hand and the map laid out it is possible to handle the problem of organization in a simple way. It is easy to cut out a garage and house plan on a separate piece of paper at the proper scale and move them about on the paper at will. After trying several schemes, some satisfactory arrangement is bound to present itself. In making these sketches there are special considerations for each part of the plan that are carried in mind but these considerations when treated in written form must of necessity be discussed separately in later chapters.

How much easier and better it is in starting the solution of a problem, to start right, rather than to carry obvious mistakes through the



Fig. 9—A garden becomes a reminder of many pleasant memories as it grows older.

preliminary work. The greatest mistake that is commonly made and which most vitally affects organization is lack of consideration for the plan as a whole rather than as a series of separate and unrelated parts.

Everyone has seen various gardens or plantings that they would like to work out in some similar manner on their own place. It is most certain that these favorable impressions have been received from different parts of different places, each being attractive or clever, both in design and treatment, and in the way they harmonized with the rest of the scheme. To gather up these favorable ideas and plant them bodily in one's own place would mean in most cases a conglomerate and unorganized development most displeasing in its results.

In starting the plan the idea that should be carried into the process of development could almost be expressed as a creed in something of this fashion, "I will make the best of the natural advantages and opportunities that are offered, choosing in my treatment only those ideas which are absolutely fit and will bring about a harmonious whole."

By feeling from the start that there is some limit only in the choice of things which are fit, and not in the artistic expression that can be put into whatever form of development is chosen, much disappointment can be prevented. It is not a loss but a gain to approach the next step, which is determining the treatment and use of the separate areas, with this idea in mind. In the uses these separate spaces will perform, they will be seen wholly or in part at one time, and the different points of view should be kept in mind. The appearance and treatment of each affects the attractiveness of the other and of the whole. Thus organization evolves itself into the proper association of the different parts with especial consideration given to their fitness and relation in appearance and approach from one another.

In most city places where there is a rectangular house on a rectangular lot a simple and

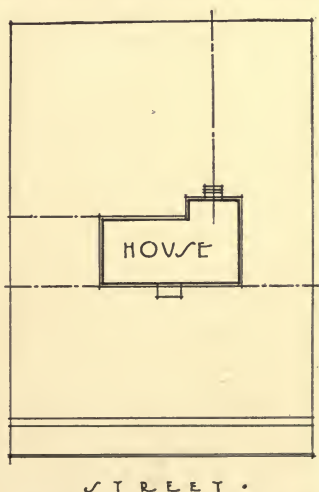


Fig. 10—A division of areas by extending the lines of the house



Fig. 11—We should not miss the joy of living in our gardens

direct method of dividing the lot up into the different areas, for the purpose of study, is accomplished by extending the lines of the house in some such manner as shown in the illustration. (Fig. 10).¹ In a rough way this method divides the property into a series of rectangular parts. The idea of a geometrical treatment of the plan at once presents itself. In this idea is found the reason and justification of the fitness for restraint and formality in the design for city places.

There is an age old idea that there are two separate and distinct forms of landscape treatment, the formal and informal. There is also an age-old controversy between those who choose and favor one form as opposed to the other. For our purpose it is better to understand something of the characteristics of each form and follow the logical way of choosing either or both according to the consistency of the instance.

With formal we generally associate the idea of the definite and controlled line, form and shape. These are regular patterns, regular lines, of geometric precision and arrangement. With informal the idea might be taken to mean just the opposite of formal, but as referred to here it means less formal, less controlled, and freer in line, and opposed to apparent geometric pattern and form.

Naturally the parts of the grounds that are close to and appear almost as a part of the house, repeating and carrying out its lines,



Fig. 12—The front lawn should be left open with the trees and shrubs relegated to the sides

would require a formal treatment. (Fig. 41). Where there is no reason, such as association with a building or the definite outline created by walls, etc., there is frequently a chance for the freer, less formal, treatment to be used in a fitting manner.

Informal in this case does not mean naturalistic. Naturalistic conditions occur in their true state only, within natural and virgin country, few of which such places can be found for miles around in the districts where most people live. One visit to such a place would quickly reveal the possible opportunities for hunting or for building a hermit's lodge, but the wild natural and uncontrolled character could not be transferred in a reduced portion to city property and even be tolerated, nor would it have the slightest merit.

Aristotle says, "Nature has the will but not the power to reach perfection." We take our inspiration from nature but we should not attempt to copy her. As Mrs. Van Rensselaer says, "Every step in civilization is away from the wild state, which alone is true nature, and the further we get the more imagination is needed to bring the elements of use and beauty, which nature still supplies, into harmony with these which man has developed." *

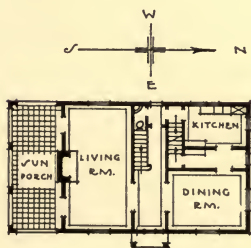
Complete organization can be secured only in the finished plan, but the work of organizing is carried on from the start to the finish. Knowing, then, what is required, our attention can turn to those special considerations affecting the treatment of the different areas.

* Art Out of Doors

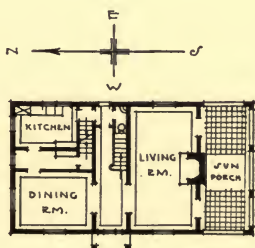
CHAPTER III

LOCATING THE HOUSE

IT has seemed to the writer that mistakes are made less often, by the home owner, in the selection of a suitable location for the house than in any other phase of home development. When it comes to locating the house on the lot there seems to be an intuition which instinctively draws one to the most acceptable site. It is equally true that often when the opportunity of doing something extremely fine presents itself the opportunity is seldom seized. The greatest mistake on the part of the home owner seems to be not so much in locating the house properly, but rather in planning the house with reference to the site so that the two will bear proper relation to each other; thus affording a congruent and efficient arrangement. The location of the house upon the property is of fundamental importance, for when the house is located the various areas about the house are automatically determined. As it is the arrangement of the house, as well as its location, that determines these areas, it is equally and fundamentally important to consider the outside arrangement and views in planning the arrangement of the rooms.



A. PLAN SHOWING ARRANGEMENT OF ROOMS IN HOUSE FACING EAST



B. PLAN SHOWING RE-ARRANGEMENT OF ROOMS FOR SAME HOUSE FACING WEST.

Fig. 13

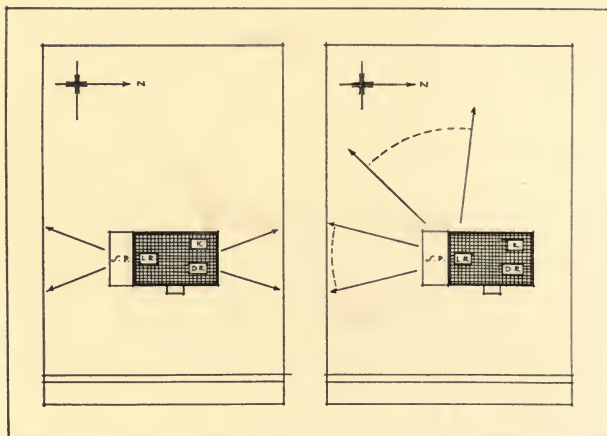


Fig. 14—The plan to the right is obviously more desirable for there is ample room for a garden and a private lawn area to the south and southwest

Thus it will be seen that the plans for the house and its subsequent location upon the property should be studied at one and the same time. These points, especially the proper consideration of the site and the orientation of the house, will be considered by the architect but he will not, naturally, devote his attention to the grounds and their arrangement which is the work of a landscape architect. Where both architect and landscape architect are employed, which is of course the ideal, there should be the same simultaneous consideration given to the planning of the house and the planning of the grounds, and both should work together from the start. It is realized, however, that there is a large body of home owners, who for one reason or another, will find the services of the architect and landscape architect unavailable and to them especially will these suggestions be of value.

The importance of considering the arrangement of the house in conjunction with the arrangement of the grounds now becoming apparent; we are led to a study of the points which should influence our course of action. Supposing our ideal plan, such as plan A (Fig. 13), is sketched out, and that our lot faces east. The plan is seen to be an ideal one for we have a southern exposure for sun parlor and living portion of the house, while the kitchen is to the northwest—the least desirable portion of our home.

Let us in locating our house upon the property assume that the distance from the street is predetermined. We then locate our home

equidistant from each side of the property, as is often done. (Fig. 14). We readily see that there is little opportunity for a garden development in the most desirable place, south of our sun porch, and that there is an equal amount of ground north of the kitchen where no prospect is needed. We thus see that a house of this plan would be far better located as close to the property line on the north (Fig. 14) as is expedient with the requirements and best use of every area. This arrangement would give us sufficient space for an extension of the sun porch in the form of an attractive out-of-door's living room as well as ample space for the service portion.

In contrast to this ideal scheme let us assume that in working out our house plan we had secured the same arrangement of rooms according to our ideas but completely reversed as shown in plan B (Fig. 13). Placing this house on the same lot facing east one can readily see that the scheme would be extremely bad and that the house, to take the same advantage of the grounds, would have to be placed close to the south of the property rather than to the north, even though such an arrangement would only right matters to a small degree. Thus we see that the plan of the house should be made with the place and the compass in mind for without such study a desirable solution of the problem of locating the house becomes merely a matter of chance.

In case we wished to use plan A upon a piece of property facing west the plan should be reversed as is shown by plan B. It will be seen by looking at (Fig. 33) that house A, although possibly not ideal in each case, could be used on a lot facing north and east while plan B could be used upon a lot facing south and west. In any case the living portion of the house, garden and lawn areas, should be to the south, southeast and southwest, while the kitchen and service portion of the house should be towards the north.

Just as the grounds around the living portion of the house should be developed to present a pleasing prospect, just so should the house be planned in order that any existing views can be enjoyed to the greatest advantage.

Although we are dealing here with the elements concerned with making the plans for the grounds it might be well in considering the location of the house to give some attention to the very important point of determining the proper relation between lot level, street level, and house level.

Although rise in grade from the street to the house is considered desirable, it is a common fallacy to assume that a house should never be located below the level of the street; for surely some of the most attractive places have been developed in this way.



Fig. 15—A small home well located. Notice the arrangement of the front walk and how much better it is than a long flight of steps to the front door would be

In many cases in order to feel that the house is higher than the surrounding ground the house is built upon a high foundation if one can be charitable enough to prescribe a line of reasoning for this practice; but in most cases we secretly believe it is done because it is the prevailing custom.

If high foundations are employed it is impossible to feel a close intimacy between house and grounds unless terraces are built about the living portion of the house. When the first floor level is close to the ground level one can really feel that the gardens are out-door living rooms easily accessible.

If the house is planned to fit the lay of the ground and unnecessary cutting or filling avoided, a pleasing result is almost assured. Of course, demands of drainage and sewer connection may determine limits at times but nevertheless there is usually considerable freedom that should be rightfully exercised.

Ofttimes we can take advantage of a difference in grade in building a garage as part of the house on a lower level; thus affording an easily accessible garage and one that can be heated with a minimum expenditure.

CHAPTER IV

WALKS AND DRIVES

WALKS and drives are not only important in affording a means of going from place to place but when once established determine the division of lawn spaces and thus have a double significance. In laying out a roadway or walk, although being laid out in the simplest manner, the practical points should be given paramount consideration; tho' making no claim to beauty, they will, when laid out properly, satisfy our sense of fitness, for there is a certain satisfaction experienced when we see a utilitarian problem handled in the most efficient manner.

The location of the driveway entrance in the city place is determined by the lay of the ground, the location of the garage and the



Fig. 16—Stepping stone walks give a touch of informality which cannot be secured by any other medium

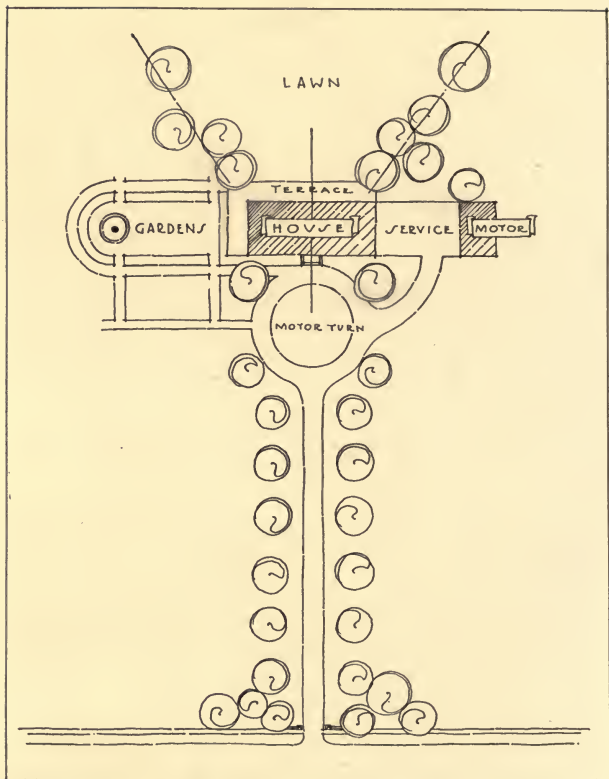


Fig. 17—An avenue offering direct approach to the home is often desirable

necessary point of contact with the house, not forgetting to take into consideration any existing natural features which would be encountered, and that we wish the drive to function in the most efficient manner and become an harmonious part of the general design.

The driveway and walk should enter the property at right angles to the street, but in some cases where there is a preponderance of traffic from one direction, the entrance to the drive can be planned to favor that direction. (Fig. 18). If the lot is a corner one, the driveway or walk

should not enter at the corner. If it is necessary to locate the walk or driveway close to the corner, the entrance should at least be some feet away from the junction of the property line. (Fig. 19).

The walks and drives should be as direct as possible; they should never follow a curve which would seem to carry one away from the place desired. Often, especially upon a small place, a straight drive will be the most desirable. The lines of the street in most cases are straight and the straight drive is, after all, repeating the lines of the street in a harmonious way. On more pretentious grounds the straight drive is sometimes used as a formal axis to the house; the prospect of the house then being to the side opposite the street. (Fig. 17). When the driveway is placed close to one side of the property and parallel to it, a straight drive would be most desirable, for it thus becomes a part of the border arrangement and does not interfere with any other space which might be desired for the public lawn area.

When a curve seems desirable, as is often the case in steep grades, it should be an easy, graceful one and seldom, if ever, should a pronounced reverse curve be used when the house is within one hundred and fifty feet of the street and especially not when the whole walk or drive comes in view at the same time. (Fig. 20).

Every effort should be made to secure a pleasing curve and one which will take care of every demand made upon it. One will notice that pleasant curves are made by the country dirt roads where the pleasing lines have resulted from the natural course of traffic rather than from any lines set down by man. In most cases no hard and fast engineering methods need be followed in laying out a course upon the ground. The drive should be staked out and sighted until a pleasing effect is assured. Then, where possible, it should be tested by driving over it before construction is started.

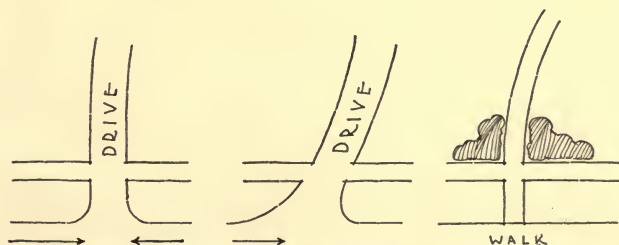


Fig. 18—Driveways should enter the property at right angles except where the preponderance of traffic is from one direction

It is not necessary, as is often supposed, that the driveway should come up flush with the entrance to the house when consideration is given to a place for getting in and out of the car. A few steps from the entrance to the landing is of little consequence while the location of the driveway in a more favorable place might mean much in the harmonious planning of the grounds.

An area for a car to turn in should be at least 60 feet in diameter, which is a rather large space to be given over for this purpose alone upon the city place. For this reason the problem is handled in many



Fig. 19—Walks should not enter at a corner

other ways and a turn around is seldom enjoyed except as a part of the service portion of the grounds. Often the front yard is given over to a driveway scheme where the house is close to the street, a half turn being employed.

Unless there is a turn table in the garage and a turning space is desired, some scheme for backing and turning is necessary. This backing space for the car is secured in three general ways: By paving an area sufficiently large enough for the car to back out, without a definite track for the car to follow being defined (Fig. 21 C); by a spur

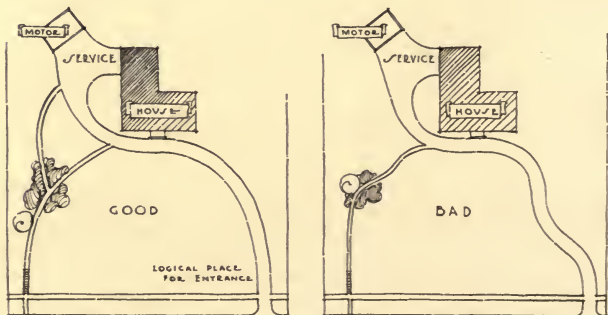


Fig. 20—When space is limited, long, gentle curves are far more desirable than short reversed curves

which is planned to conform with the turn made by the car in backing out (Fig. 21 A); and by a turn around in which the car is backed out in the same manner, but in which case it is a little easier to go forward (Fig. 21 B).

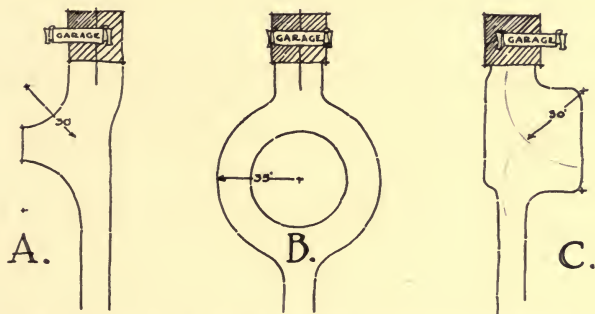


Fig. 21—Three types of drive arrangement offering convenient space in which cars can be backed from the garage and turned

Often when the area in which to back out the car is limited, a scheme for backing more than once would be advisable. (Fig. 22). A scheme like (Fig. 22 B) would meet the requirements when a turn around is demanded; a part of the circle thus acting as a spur to back out in when leaving the garage.

Many car drivers, who own small city places do not consider it a hardship to back from the garage to the street rather than give over the area required for a turn around, or backing space.

Often upon the modern place, especially if the house is some distance from the street, the driveway is used as a walk for pedestrians. Where the traffic is more or less divided the driveway is often used by the pedestrian for entering from one side of the property while a path is used for entering from the other. (Fig. 23).

If the entire place were left in lawn for a season the lines of travel made across the lawn would give us a broad general hint as to where our walks should be located. Where a path is seen cutting across a lawn, it is in many cases certain, that there was an error in judgment when the disposition of the walks and drives was determined. Thus it will be seen that it is necessary to anticipate where the travel would naturally come and plan as near as possible to the natural demands as the details incident to a good design will permit.

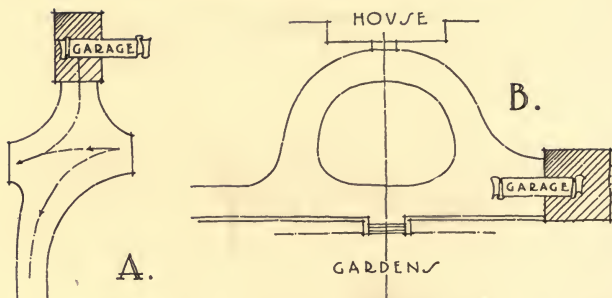


Fig. 22—(A) Suggested arrangement of drive for backing and turning car when space is limited. (B) The drive can offer space in which to back and turn and still function as an important element in the general scheme

Unlike the driveway the walk can cut across the lawn from street to house without dividing the lawn area, although it should in most cases conform to the general scheme. One should not plant a hedge along a walk leading straight to the house or even a row of flowers, for this divides the lawn into two separate parts.

When constructed of brick, gravel or some other material of pleasing texture and color, the drives and walk will have an added interest. Stepping stones can be used when there is not much traffic and in places where there is a certain effect desired. (Fig. 16). Often a few

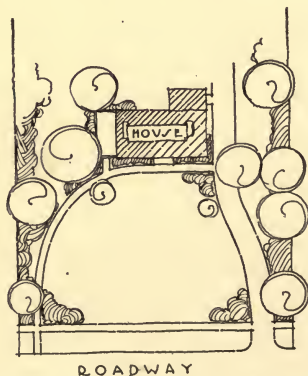
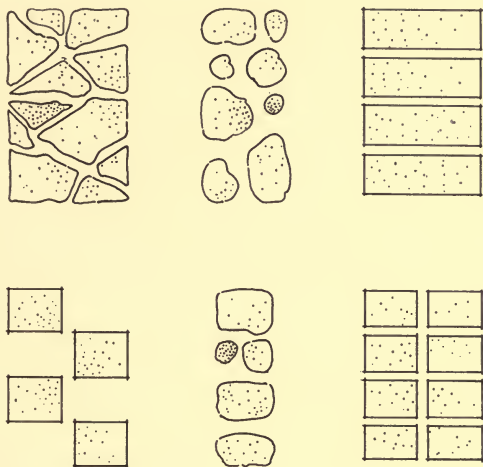


Fig. 23—Driveways are often used as walks



• TYPES — STEPPING STONES •

Fig. 24—Common types of stepping stone walks

stones will give the idea that there is something to be seen where they lead, even though the grass would be used more than the stones in reaching the point of interest. There are many types of stepping stones. A few of the more common types are shown by the accompanying illustration. (Fig. 24).

WIDTHS AND GRADES IN WALKS AND DRIVES

Upon the city place where the length of the driveway can be seen from the street the drive can be as narrow as eight feet, although a driveway of nine or ten feet in most cases is better, especially for curves. When the house is some distance from the street and a width wide enough for cars to pass in is desired it should not be less than 14 feet, and a roadway of 16 feet would serve the purpose much better.

When the house is only a short distance from the street, gutters for the car to run in are permissible. They should be 4 feet 8 inches on centers and should be slightly concave so that the driver will have no trouble in keeping the wheels in the tracks.

Where the property has considerable rise or fall in its grades it is advisable to follow the contour of the ground. This assures an easier grade and makes deep cuts and fills less apt to be required. A grade of 7 per cent or a rise of 7 feet in every 10 feet, is considered the limit of an easy grade, while a 10 per cent grade is considered as steep as a drive should be constructed under normal conditions. The width of walks depends upon their use and location. For main entrance walks, a width of no less than 4 feet is highly practicable. Service walks which do not function as part of the design and which are merely hard surfaced paths convenient to walk upon, and direct, can properly be made from $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet up as is determined by the appearance and the demands made upon them.

CHAPTER V

THE DIVISION OF AREAS

WHEN the house is definitely located the division of the property into various areas for different purposes becomes apparent.

The grounds about the house are divided in three general classifications: (1) The Public Area—that portion of the property commonly called “the front yard,” and which we allow the public to enjoy with us; (2) The Private Area—that portion of the grounds which is developed for the occupants of the home and their guests; (3) The Service Area—that portion of the property set aside as a working portion, for the location of the garage and for various utilitarian uses. (Fig. 26).

We find that we wish to divide these general areas further, for we wish to include as part of our private area the garden area which suggested itself when the house was located. As a part of our service area we wish a vegetable garden, a laundry yard, a garage and sufficient space for backing and turning the car. (Fig. 27).



Fig. 25—A foundation planting softens the lines between house and grounds

CHAPTER VI

THE PUBLIC AREA

IN democratic America it is not the custom, as it is in some European countries, to have walls about the front of our places. We would rather give some consideration to the public and have in the space between the house and the street an area for the view and enjoyment of the passerby. If the public can see farther back than the house we give them a familiarity with the working and pleasure portions of our property which means that we lose the opportunity for the greatest enjoyment of our grounds by sacrificing our privacy.

The public area is of great importance for it plays the prominent part of forming the setting of our homes as viewed from the street. It is our's in this sense and in this sense we should so treat it. It belongs to the public in that it becomes part of the environment of every one using the street just the same as every other lot and should be considered accordingly.

The home owner should always keep in mind that it is his duty to do everything in his power to make his street more attractive. Unless each home owner plans his lot not as a lot in itself but as a part of the whole block and street, the street cannot present a harmonious aspect no matter how well laid out or how important a part it plays in the city plan. Do not plant in the parking unless it is the policy of the whole street to do so, for such planting interferes with the vista down the street and often such planting is the cause of serious automobile accidents.

One often sees the lines of the property extended into the parking with planting (Fig. 31), the argument being used that by planting in the parking the place is given greater expanse. But suppose this is true, it is then also true that when the yard is thus increased in size the public walks pass directly through the lawn which is certainly not desirable. It would seem far better to have the lawn seem smaller and be completely away from public traffic.

In studying the plan, no matter what scheme of planting is worked out near the front property line, it is especially important to remember that if the house is on a corner that the planting should not be high toward the street intersection, for such planting is objectionable to public safety.

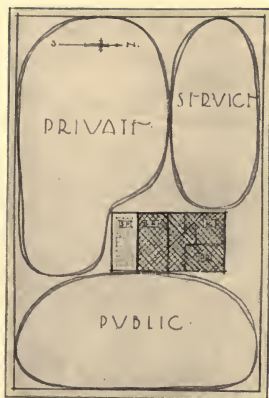


Fig. 26—General division of areas

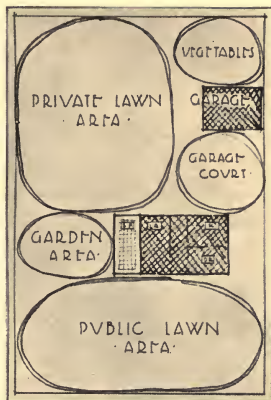


Fig. 27—Further division of general areas

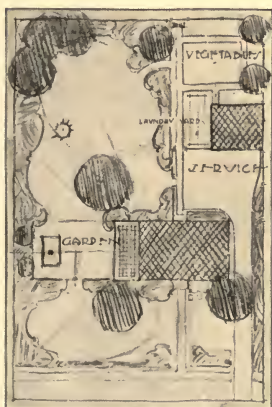


Fig. 28—Finished preliminary sketch

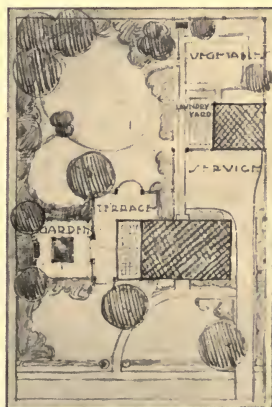


Fig. 29—Study showing another solution of the same problem

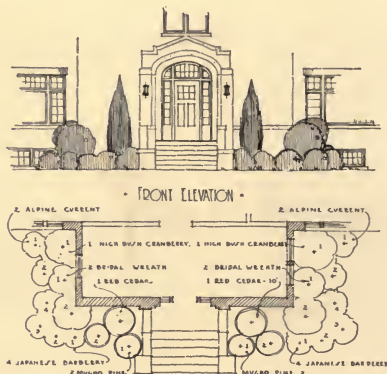


Fig. 30—Planting masses should be studied in elevation and in plan

The treatment of the public area becomes largely a matter of planting arrangement. Both the foundation planting and the borders should be studied in plan and elevation. The general effect desired can thus be determined and then the selection of the plants required is merely a matter of detail. Let us use the accompanying illustration for example. (Fig. 30). Here is shown the method of determining the plan for the planting. The greater portion of the lawn should have an open center unbroken by planting except for trees and specimen plants, the shrub masses being relegated to the foundation and border

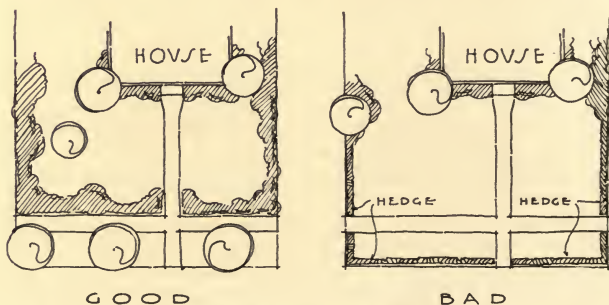


Fig. 31—The planting along the property lines should not be extended to the parking area



Fig. 32—A foundation planting of evergreens is attractive the year round

line. Of course when the whole street leaves out planting along the property line it would be only right to do so likewise.

The importance of foundation planting and its careful consideration cannot be over emphasized. The main need for foundation planting is to relieve that abrupt transition from grounds to house that the house may seem tied to, and a part of the grounds rather than like a big box in an open space. (Fig. 25). The foundation planting should be considered as carefully as the design of the building itself. A ring of bushes of monotonous character is little better than nothing at all and will not do. To enhance the appearance and supplement the architectural design of the house careful attention to form, color and mass is involved. For instance if in a study in plan and elevation (Fig. 30), we find that we wish a tall growing plant of rather pyramidal form to be used for accent purposes on each side of the entrance, we naturally would desire a plant which holds its foliage the year around. Of the various evergreens the red cedar would prove adaptable and would fill our qualifications exactly. We see that two low growing evergreens beneath and in front of the red cedar of low form are needed and for this use and for these characteristics the Mugho Pine is desirable.

The recesses about the foundation should be planted with the tall

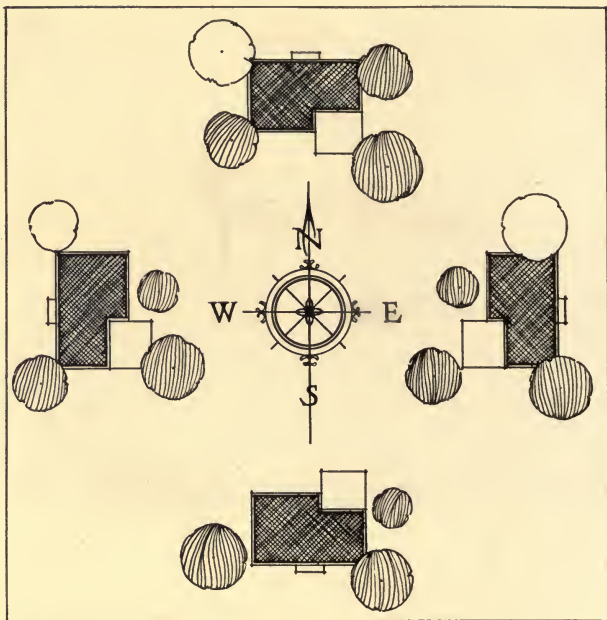


Fig. 33—This plan shows the location of trees for shade, the house facing different directions. The trees unshaded are used for framing purposes. The portion of the house unshaded is the sun porch

growing shrubs, the smaller shrubs being planted in front; here and there along the foundation, suitable vines may be planted to grow over wall and porch. When there is a bare spot in the wall space a small tree can be used.

Often an evergreen planting along the foundation will prove attractive and beautiful the year through. (Fig. 32). It need hardly be mentioned that an evergreen planting is far more expensive and that there are generally more plants lost than in a deciduous planting. The practice of planting the foundation in a veritable mat effect, where interest is attracted away from the house, is bad for obvious reasons.

Avoid gaudy, conspicuous shrubs in foundation planting; shrubs with seasonable bloom are highly desirable. By all means do not plant the golden and variegated varieties about the foundation, especially if they fail to harmonize with the color of the house.

The location of trees about the home is extremely important. Often the home owner buys trees and places them with little or no thought and generally they are planted equidistant from the walk half way between the house and the street. (Fig. 34). When they grow up they blot out the view of the house and seldom afford shade where shade is needed.

Trees should be used to frame the view of the house and of course where shade is needed. (Fig. 33). This sketch will give some idea as to where trees should be located for shade and where trees might be planted for framing purposes. This chart is worked out for houses facing north, east, south and west. The trees which are planned for balance and for framing are left undarkened upon the sketch.

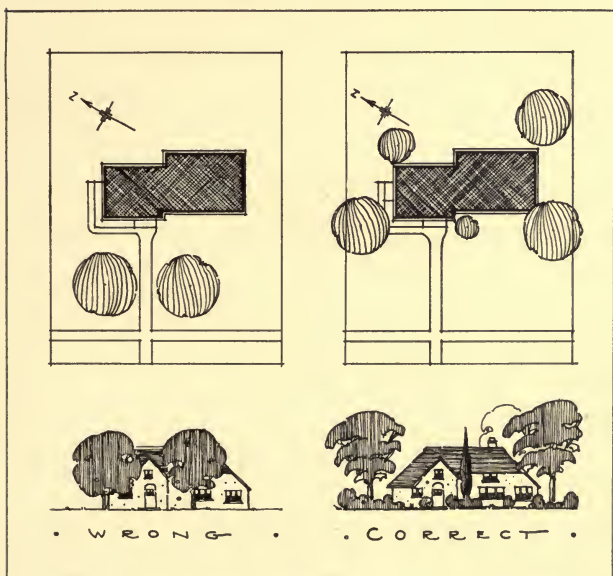


Fig. 34—Trees should be planted to frame the view of the house

CHAPTER VII

THE PRIVATE AREA

THE private area is that portion of the grounds planned to afford facilities for out-of-door social activities and play, without undue exposure to the public eye. It is neither selfishness nor snobbishness but merely the most complete enjoyment of our property which prompts our actions in screening this portion of the grounds. The private area should be planned to express the individuality of the owner; admittance to which should be as sacred as to the house itself.

It is difficult to understand the attitude of those who wish to parade the extent of their property to the public gaze. To the writer it would

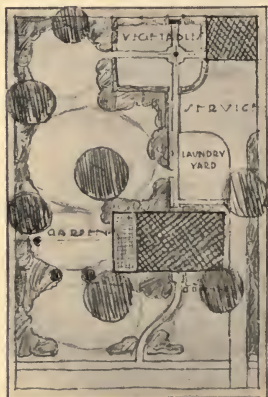


Fig. 35—Sketch showing method of studying planting lines

seem just as sensible to have the rooms of the house open to the view of every passerby; and surely no one would wish to do this.

Privacy is secured in most cases by planting, which is attractive in itself and thus serves a two-fold purpose. Often walls of brick or stone



Fig. 36—Although located in a large city, this garden, designed primarily to attract birds, satisfies every esthetic requirement

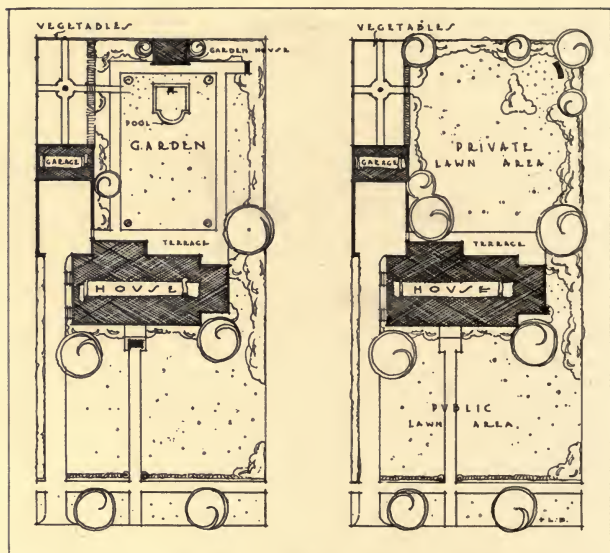


Fig. 37—The private area may be either formally or informally planned

or fence of lattice covered with vines serve to screen the view of the private area from the street. When walls and fences are used they can be so designed with arches and niches that in their appearance from the private area they become an important and attractive part of the development.

The private portion of the property can be planned as a simple lawn area bordered by trees, shrubs and flowers, or take a more comprehensive form where the architectural lines of the house can be extended and the boundary lines repeated in a formal scheme (Fig. 37); in other cases a combination of the two before mentioned schemes can be used, the garden being, in most cases, developed as an extension of the house. (Fig. 29).

In planning the private area, if it is to be arranged informally, it might prove helpful to adopt a system such as is suggested herewith for arranging the confines of the beds. (Fig. 38). By following this procedure a well arranged area should result; the large circle representing the general outline of the planting while the smaller circles represent the individual nooks and recesses.

After the planting has been studied in plan it should also be studied in elevation. The planting should be high in places and lower in others for there are often objectionable views to screen and often views to be framed. Accents should be used in the planting masses for variety. As in foundation planting, or any other planting for that matter, the type of shrubs and the characteristics desired should be decided upon and then trees and shrubs selected to fill these qualifications.

Let us assume, for instance, that the view at the rear of our property is something like the one shown in the accompanying sketch (Fig. 39), all of which is on our neighbor's property to the rear. The type of planting selected would be much similar to the accompanying elevation. After deciding upon the types, sizes, etc., which are wished for this purpose the trees and shrubs could be easily found from the various planting lists, books, etc., which are prepared to assist one in making quick selections.

The formal garden is most successful as an extension of the architectural lines of the house for there it seems in keeping, while upon other portions of the grounds, where there is no association with the house, care must be exercised in making it seem appropriate in its setting. In planning a formal area we should bear in mind that the walks are really the backbone of the garden plan, although these walks are often of grass. The plan for the garden should be carefully studied in order that the most pleasing proportions be secured. A formal garden should never be constructed upon sloping ground, for although it may appear pleasing in plan it will most surely be disappointing when executed. Upon irregular ground the garden may be planned in a series of differ-

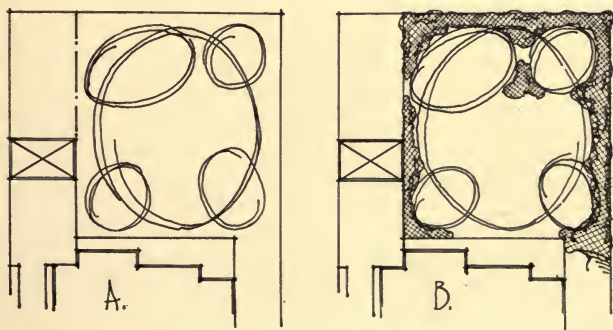


Fig. 38—Method suggested for determining the outlines of planting beds

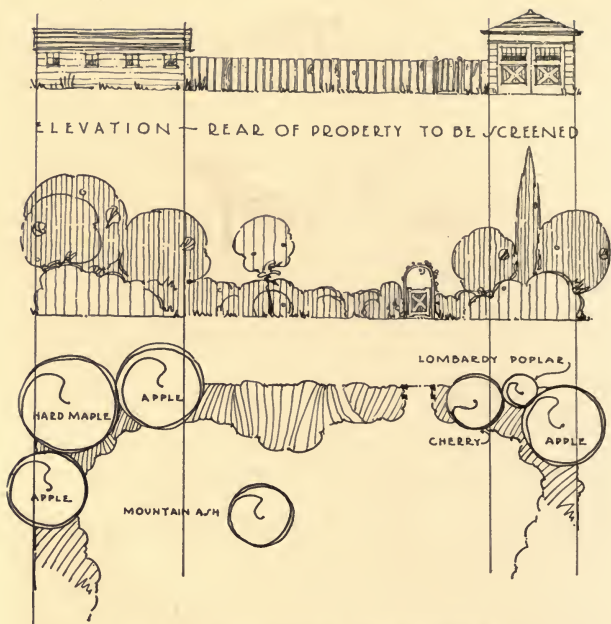


Fig. 39—Study of planting in plan and elevation.

ent levels where the different terraces create an effect often more interesting than that constructed all upon one level.

Any error in design is more readily perceptible in the formal garden than in an area informally planned, for the formal garden is fundamentally geometrical, thus mistakes in balance and proportion can be easily seen. For this reason the planning of the formal garden should be entrusted to an expert if the problem is one where technical training is required. Architectural features in the garden should be well executed; statues and other garden features should be selected carefully as they are seen as closely as the furniture in the house.

When a formal garden, or more than one formal garden for that matter, is used, in connection with informal lawn areas, the transition from one to the other should be carefully worked out in order that they do not detract from each other and so that the transition seems natural.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SERVICE AREA

THE service portion of the property embraces the garage, garage court, vegetable garden, laundry yard and all other out-door working parts. As has previously been stated the service area should be screened both from the street and the living portion of the house and grounds.

The service area should be easily reached from the street and should be accessible to the kitchen entrance and to the entrance leading to the basement of the home. The arrangement of the garage and garage court should be designed in a manner as shown in the Chapter on "Walks and Drives."

The vegetable garden can be made an attractive portion of the service area and can open out upon the more private portion of the grounds.



Fig. 40—Visible evidence of the attractive results secured by leaving the open lawn free from shrubs

Often a hedge or a lattice fence is all that is needed to define the boundary. Flowers for cut purposes should be grown in the vegetable garden, and there should be a cold frame for starting plants early in the season and for growing greenery for garnishing purposes. A greenhouse is highly desirable as it will thus afford flowers and greenery the year through. A greenhouse can be made an interesting part of the grounds.

The laundry area should afford a segregated space for drying clothes and is a necessity where there is much drying to be done. There are many devices upon the market at the present, upon which to hang clothes and which can be removed from the yard when not in use. When a removable post is used it is not necessary to have a separate and screened laundry yard when the use of the grounds for drying purposes would be required but one day a week. However, it is wise to have facilities for drying clothes in small quantities close to the kitchen to be used for clothes to be dried upon days other than the regular wash days; this area being screened, of course.

Possibly one of the arrangements for erecting temporary posts upon which to tie the clothes line is that in which a socket is set in the ground which receives the post and which is covered over with a grass colored metal cap when not in use.

Inconspicuous containers for refuse should be located in the service area where they are not unsightly and can be easily emptied.

CHAPTER IX

HOW TO INSURE TASTEFUL EXPRESSION

AS it is the purpose here to bring before the reader that information which will best serve him in the proper development of the grounds it would seem that a few "don'ts" might help to prevent a few of the most common mistakes that are made.

Much the same as in painting a picture, part of the art in gardening consists of that ability of realizing when the picture has reached that point where the requirements of composition are satisfied and where procedure has to be made with caution that the picture may reach perfection rather than be harmed by the addition of new and inharmonious colors and elements.

To see and understand what is meant by harming the appearance of the place and street in general, one only needs to drive along any residential street where numerous mistakes and inharmonious practices will be revealed.

Where there is little opportunity to have any thing in the way of flowers and plants it seems that one's natural tendency is to choose something striking in form or color. The most elementary expression in design makes its appearance in the cherished flower beds which appear on either side of the front walk with both beds gorgeously set off by an edging of sea shells or a painted wire fence.

Although many of the expressions of that desire to have flowers and plants may take a garish or crude form, it is often the case that the source of the inspiration and the idea expressed is most often taken from some public area or from some supposedly fine grounds. Is it little wonder that when some man creates a lavish effect by having great beds of red and yellow cannas scattered over his lawn that he influences others and impresses them so thoroughly that the canna-growing industry is given great impetus?

Simplicity is always the keynote of beauty, and if simplicity is combined with good taste it will mean the doing away with such things as the round geranium bed, the pyramidal rock pile of Gibraltar strength, the iron hitching post, other iron effigies, all of which have their proper place in a museum as examples of an age gone past. Why, oh why, must any old receptacle that will hold dirt be used for a

flower box and dangle on the veranda? Even old boats have been robbed of their privilege of taking that last peaceful journey to Davey Jones' locker and instead have been filled with dirt for the display of cactus and vinca, while sailing a stationery journey in a sea of grass.

These, and many other mistakes, will be avoided by adhering to the following dont's.

1. Don't clutter up the lawn with horticultural specimens, round flower beds, iron dogs or other things of doubtful character.
2. Don't make your places conspicuous and showy.
3. Don't feature exotics and horticultural creations of questionable value.
4. Don't forget to see your place as others see it.

And last of all, don't let your love for flowers or plants blind you to the appearance of your place as a whole. Think of beauty not as it is expressed in the individual thing alone, but in its relation to all things about it. It is then that there will be a realization of careful and tasteful expression of individuality in the grounds as well as in the home.



Fig. 41 – The formal garden should, in most cases, be an extension of the lines of the house

“And there is no employment or recreation which affords the mind greater or more permanent satisfaction, than that of cultivating the earth and adorning our own property.”

—A. J. Downing.

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